

This requires building a revolutionary movement that provides solidarity and support with migrant workers facing racist attacks and intimidation. A movement which is prepared to utilise the weapons of self-defence in terms of militant antifascist activity and go on the offensive in terms of agitating and organising on issues which affect our class from housing and unemployment to workplace struggles. We also need to be cautious and strategic in our approach. No amount of pandering to, and weasel words from, our political masters at Stormont, Westminster and Dublin will solve our problems as they are part of the problem rather than the solution. Finally in the words of Buenaventura Durutti:

*"We are not in the least afraid of ruins. We are going to inherit the earth. There is not the slightest doubt about that. The bourgeoisie might blast and ruin its own world before it leaves the stage of history. We carry a new world, here in our hearts. That world is growing this minute."*



### Who We Are

**Antifa is a national federation comprised of local groups of militant antifascists, affiliated to the international Antifa movement.**

**We exist to confront fascist ideas, activities and organisations wherever and however they occur.**

**We utilise a wide range of tactics and believe it is important to confront fascism physically as well as ideologically.**

**We do not advocate the electoral process as the means of defeating fascism nor will we work with groups that do.**

**Our structure is anti-authoritarian and non hierarchical. We oppose discrimination based on race, gender, sexuality, ability or age.**

**We will not work with, accept information from, nor pass information to the magazine Searchlight.**

Antifa have groups and contacts all across the country. To get in touch with your nearest group please contact us at:

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**Email: [info@antifa.org.uk](mailto:info@antifa.org.uk) Phone: 07880 697831**

Check out our website at:

**[WWW.ANTIFA.ORG.UK](http://WWW.ANTIFA.ORG.UK)**



## WHAT WE THINK

### 'Interview With Antifa, A Militant Antifascist Organisation'

(Antifa activists interviewed by Sean Matthews from the Workers Solidarity Movement - Ireland)

***"Anarchists are inevitably anti-fascists, but our anti-fascism does not see fascism as 'bad government' and ask 'good government' to save us. Fascism is just the worst government and to it we oppose class struggle, human liberation, and physical opposition."***

*Fascism is often a misunderstood ideology such as being solely equated with racism and Nazism. Firstly, what is fascism and why should it be opposed?*

It's quite common for people to equate fascism with racism and it's often the case that fascist groups will use racist or xenophobic rhetoric and propaganda in order to spread their message. However it would be wrong to see fascism solely as a form of racism.

Traditionally fascist parties have used ethnic minorities as a scapegoat for the

problems created by capitalism. For instance the BNP often point to migrant workers as being the cause for the degradation of the NHS or the reason for the lack of decent social housing. Similarly they blame migrant workers for "taking our jobs" instead of attacking the employers who routinely pay derisory wages and treat workers like disposable commodities. The reason fascist groups tend to attack ethnic minorities and immigrants in this way is because they want to divide the working class. By sowing the seeds of division, fragmentation and suspicion in working

class communities they undermine notions of solidarity and cooperation thus strengthening the status quo and perpetuating existing inequalities in society.

Racism and xenophobia are not the primary goals of fascism, but are rather part of their means for promoting the ascendancy of the nation state. Fascism promotes the ideals of nationalism and patriotism in opposition to internationalism and class solidarity. Fascism's glorification of the nation is really the veneration of the hierarchies that exist within the nation. Fascism promotes the interests of a ruling elite above those of the majority and in the past used all the apparatus of the state to ensure that those hierarchies in society are maintained and bolstered. In this context, talk of supporting the "indigenous people" is used to garner the support of the white working and middle classes to undermine class unity between people of different races or nationality.

Fascism should be opposed because it aims to crush all autonomy and freedom in the name of creating a strong nation state; it curtails freedom of expression, supports rigid hierarchies and most importantly stands against the interests of every working class person regardless of their race or nationality.

*Should freedom of speech be extended to fascists?*

None of us have the power to stop fascists saying what they think, we cannot legislate against their words no matter how vile we consider them to be and neither would we want to be in a position to do so. However that doesn't mean we should tolerate their presence in our communities or allow them a platform from which to organise. History has shown that when fascist groups come to

power they use all the apparatus of the state to violently crush progressive working class groups and initiatives. If all Nick Griffin and his disciples were doing was talking amongst themselves about repatriating migrant workers, clamping down on those they saw as deviants and splitting communities along lines of race then there wouldn't be a serious problem. The reality is the BNP are organising to gain seats of power and to implement their white nationalist policies. This attempt to gain power and influence must be challenged by all effective means.

*Does militant antifascist activity over-exaggerate the threat posed by fascist groups in comparison to the level of institutionalised racism within the state such as the draconian deportation of refugees?*

Following the latest local elections in England the BNP now have 55 councillors, even in the days of Oswald Moseley's British Union of Fascists or the heyday of the National Front in the 1970s such a result would've be seen as unachievable. In Stoke on Trent it is thought that the BNP could be running the council in a matter of years. It is naïve to think that the BNP remains a fringe party; they are now well established in a number of areas in Britain.

That said, it is true that the current Labour government have done more harm to communities than the BNP could even hope to do at the moment. It's the Labour government that has eroded civil liberties through the Terrorism Act, it's the Labour Party that has overseen the creeping privatisation of the NHS, it's the Labour Party that has undertaken the latest assaults on working conditions and lower earners and it's the Labour government that continues to deport refugees back to countries where they are likely to be persecuted.

year old was also murdered by the far right. In 2008 we hope to strengthen those links and grow as an organization both here and abroad.

*Could you also write a few words about how you would like to be described and let me know if there are any events/issues Antifa would like highlighted.*

We can be described by reading our Founding Statement (see Antifa website.) Look out for the annual Cable Street anniversary gig in October. We are also trying to put on smaller fund raising events throughout the year and would welcome any ideas or help from groups or individuals who might want to hold such an event for us. We would provide any necessary security where possible.

*In Britain there is proud tradition of militant antifascism, what strengths and weakness if any can Antifa learn from previous organisations such as Red Action and Anti-Fascist Action?*

We think we can learn a great deal from AFA, an organisation in which many of us were involved. We need to realise though that times have changed in certain respects, and that the tactics we employed as AFA aren't always appropriate or valid today. For better or worse unfortunately, certainly not at the moment, we do not have AFA's numbers. For many, the fight against fascism is no longer a fashionable political activity it seems. We also need to realise that our opposition are using different tactics, and also that 'security culture' and policing has changed immeasurably since the 1980's and 90's. Antifa will utilise a range of tactics in our battle against organised fascism, rejecting the blind alley of electoralism, but certainly including physical force confrontation where appropriate. Other lessons we have learned from AFA

include rejecting the pseudo-antifascist entity 'Searchlight', rejecting the 'boys club' mentality that has often prevailed among militant antifascists, and not wasting our time working with manipulative Trots.

While we support the idea of organising in our own working-class communities, we think RA was wrong to lead AFA away from physical force opposition to fascism. The IWCA (Independent Working Class Association) have failed to have any real influence on the British political scene, and are unknown outside a few small areas. To lead AFA into electoralism, in what for some of us was a very undemocratic way, was a tactical mistake. As can be evidenced by the continued rise of the BNP, and the continued existence of other fascist groups, the struggle against organised fascism is far from over, and we still have to be prepared to take on our opponents on the streets as well as ideologically. If members of RA no longer wished to be involved in physical force antifascism they should have retired rather than trying to steal the ball. Some of us in Antifa have been involved in fighting fascism longer than RA was in existence, so it is not a case of "ceasefire soldiers" coming along after the battle is already over. The struggle against fascism is far from won, and there is never a time for complacency nor to rest on one's laurels, no matter how hard won.

In recent years in the North (of Ireland) we have witnessed a rapid rise in the level of racist attacks (clearly a level of organisation), the appearance of racist graffiti and intimidation, as well as attempts by the BNP/BPP to organise here with limited success, which can lead to complacency. What role do you think anarchists and working class people here have in combating racist attacks and fascist groups?

Antifa policy. Their whole policy appears to be to shout racist at the working class folk who are hoodwinked into voting for the far right while urging us all to vote Labour, who were responsible for failing the working class so miserably in the first place! It's been said time and time again that these middle class liberals are only interested in selling the paper and building the party. We are not saying that there are not well meaning individuals within groups like the UAF, Respect, etc, but they really should have a good look at what they are involved with.



They despise us because we are prepared to use violence, but then ask us to provide security when they feel the nasty big boys of the BNP might pop along. In the past they have also been guilty of blatant lies when claiming victories against the fascists as their own when this was not the case. A recent example of just how clueless their rank and file are, was witnessed again in Oxford last year. As the Antifa contingent made its very vocal way toward the main demo in opposition to Nick Griffin speaking, the UAF faithful mistook us for the BNP and started hurling abuse at us. Not the first time that has happened.

Personally we don't believe these middle

class muppets offer the working class any real alternative and would be surprised if any genuine working class people would vote for them or give their politics the time of day. They would have more in common with the BNP!

*Antifa see antifascism as part of the class struggle. Why is this?*

It's simple really. Fascism has historically been the natural enemy of the working class. They are programmed to do the ruling classes bidding. Class struggle has always been important to antifascists and the fascists have always sided with the rich and powerful. It's a right wing thing.

*Can you say something about the international work that Antifa is involved in and some of the issues comrades face in other countries?*

Antifa have made good contacts in Poland, Russia, Germany and the Czech Republic. We are in contact with groups and individuals in Ireland, France, Italy, Sweden, Denmark, Spain, Holland, Belgium and the US. We have travelled to Germany as a group in the past and been active in demos abroad. Some of us have also attended the Antifascist Football World Cup in Italy and made links there. We have also met people that have travelled here and made links. We also try to help out financially if groups abroad need funds and over the last few years have sent hundreds of pounds to groups or individuals in need.

The problems faced by our comrades abroad can be very severe compared to what we face over here. The fascists in places like Poland, Russia and the Czech Republic in particular are a lot more extreme with large Nazi bonehead gangs often attacking demonstrations. In Russia last year two anti fascists were killed by the fascists and in Spain a young sixteen

However the strength and popularity of the BNP can also lead to the political agenda being pushed further right. The NF in Britain was all but destroyed not simply by grass roots opposition, but also because the Thatcher government appropriated much of their support. Fascism is directly linked to the social and economic conditions of society and the Labour government have created the conditions where the likes of the BNP can flourish. By undermining the welfare state and job security while simultaneously pitting domestic workers against migrant workers the Labour government have created a situation whereby the BNP are seen as a radical opposition to the government. While in essence being a staunch supporter of the status quo and the state, the BNP has been made to look like a progressive party in the context of Labour's continued attacks on the working class.

For antifascism to be effective it must be part of the wider class struggle. It's no good telling people to vote for anybody but the BNP in order to keep them out, because invariably that means either voting for the government or voting for another party who would implement the same sort of policies as Labour. If antifascism is to be successful it can't be divorced from the social and economic conditions that give rise to fascism, it must be part of the general struggle against capitalism.

Whilst antifascist groups should always point out that racism and fascism originate with capitalism and the state (or capitalist and statist ideas), it should not prevent us from using this as a get-out clause for fighting fascists. This is something many far Left and Anarchist groups do, and it is mistaken at best, naive and cowardly at worst. The threat of fascist organisations is a threat to me and



you first; the organised working class are their first target. This has not changed in the least, from the origins of fascism as a distinct ideology in the 1930's, to its present 'euro nationalist' form. In the past it was more of a direct threat, with fascists attacking Left wing groups and venues, and being used to break strikes. Because antifascists literally beat them off the streets by the mid 90's in the UK, this is no longer a focus for their activity -though they often can't help themselves when they come across trade unionists or socialists – just look at the arrest records for even today's "hands off" BNP. The threat they pose to us now is slightly more subtle but just as dangerous. By breaking communities and workplaces along racial and cultural lines, they destroy our class unity and make it twice as hard for class struggle activists to put our message across – often nicking left wing ideas directly, and putting a nationalist or racist spin on them.

Militant antifascism has always been about:

- a) Defending the left and
- b) Creating ground for the left to organise safely.

This hasn't changed, regardless of whether the left is up to the job; we still need to make sure we lose as little ground to the radical right as possible, as it will be people like us first against the wall. All that said, we totally support people who focus on state racism and immigrant rights, and we have provided security for groups like 'No Borders'. We are nonetheless separate groups for a very important reason: We are antifascists. Fascism uses racism: but racism can come from any source. We oppose fascism because it is fascism, not just because nine times out of ten it is racist. Combating every single occurrence of racism is not our goal, and antifascist groups which pretended they did have always ended up looking utterly ridiculous, like the ANL (Anti-Nazi League) picketing the movie *Romper Stomper* on the grounds it might give people ideas! Antifascism is a cause in and of itself, and should not tag onto other campaigns or Left fronts.

*Some people argue that because the British National Party (BNP) have attempted to portray themselves as a respectable political party, that militant antifascist action is no longer an effective strategy. What is your response to this?*

First off, we'd like to point out from the outset that while the BNP are without doubt the main threat in electoral terms, Antifa, as a militant antifascist organization, target the far right in any shape or form they take. Whether that is the organized parties or the small groups of sad nutters that would like to be organized parties, down to the boneheads of 'Blood and Honour.' We are largely anarchist based with most members coming from a direct action background. To us a fascist is a fascist. In answer to the question, it is true that the BNP would

have us all believe that they are a new 'whiter than white' (pun intended) reincarnation of their former selves, but we do not buy this lie for a moment. What is respectable about a party that cannot accept that we live in a multi-cultural society and at heart would enforce a fascist state if they ever seized power?

Are we seriously expected to believe that a man like Nick Griffin (leader of the BNP) has had a 'Road to Damascus' vision and has chucked in the jack boots and uniform from his not too distant past and now welcomes all and sundry? The BNP may think they are winning hearts and minds on the campaign trail, and sadly in some areas that have been the case, but historically what has fascism ever offered the working class? Other than serving the ruling class of course. We cannot accept that militancy against the fascists is not an effective strategy, as we know it can and does work. Fascism is violent by its very nature and there must always be people prepared to counter that violence and we do, without apology. Many a candidate has withdrawn from the BNP and many a BNP leaflet has not been posted because of people taking a militant stand. It should also be noted however that physical confrontation is only one tactic we employ.

We also try to work in local communities and produce propaganda where we can. We produce a newsletter and print off thousands of stickers each year. We also run a website, which we keep updated with any current news or information. The rank and file of the BNP have also shown that they still like to throw their weight around given the opportunity.

*Given the poor showing for the BNP in this year's local elections and the low membership and levels of support for organisations like the NF (National Front) and BPP (British Peoples Party) does this*

*mean that the far-right is now less of a problem?*

The local elections were not as good for them as they had hoped but to say the far right is now 'less of a problem' is wrong. In comparison to when? The BNP have dozens of councillors for the first time. We thought that the election of Derek Beacon was a result for the fuckers years ago, but look what is happening now. It is no small coincidence that Griffin looked to Europe for inspiration. If you now look at the rising right-wing feeling all over Europe and Russia you can only conclude that the far right are becoming more of a problem. We can only hope that the vast majority of people see through the charade and don't fall for their lies.

The likes of the NF and the British BPP are very small as you state, but that is not to say that they do not have dangerous people within their ranks. Nothing we can't handle though. Ask Eddy Morrison. What we do find though, is that a lot of the hardcore fascists have their grubby little fingers in each other's pies, which often leads to them having internal disputes and bouts of infighting....much to our amusement.

*Is 'destroying the BNP' still Antifa's key objective. How can this be achieved?*

The fight against fascism and organized fascists is an ongoing battle. There will always be extreme right-wing groups and we believe that we are at the forefront in the fight against them. Though we would dearly love to see any far right group confined to the dustbin of history we are convinced that the battle will rage on. Some would argue that the likes of the BNP can only be beaten through debate and counter argument. While we see this as one approach we also believe that physical confrontation where necessary should not be dismissed. These people

sow the politics of hate and division. They are our natural collective enemy.

Counter leafleting in the areas that the BNP stand candidates is another approach and we have done this when we have had the resources. We also keep our eyes and ears peeled for any juicy stuff about them that we can find out and then capitalize on. Targeting their paper sales and canvassing teams is another tactic that can be employed to good use. It's amazing how quickly they can lose that exterior 'new BNP' cool and revert back to their true colours.

A good number of Antifa activists are also involved in other areas of struggle, such as trade unions and the IWW. Being active in the workplace and the unions is a good way to get our antifascist message across. Inevitably it will be people who vote that decide whether the BNP grow or not. As anarchists or activists it should be our job to expose all the parties for the corrupt useless anti working class scum that they are, but with the extreme far right? Well, they deserve just that little bit more of our attention.



*What is your view of other anti-racist organizations like Unite against Fascism (UAF)?*

Not a lot basically. First and foremost they work with 'Searchlight' (anti-fascist magazine), who in turn work with the police and so the state. This is against